

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 477 442

HE 035 946

AUTHOR Preis, Janet; Fenzel, L. Mickey
TITLE Service-Learning in the First-Year Seminar: Providing Reciprocal Benefits and Enhancing Connections.
PUB DATE 2003-00-00
NOTE 28p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, April 21-25, 2003).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Freshmen; *Higher Education; *Interpersonal Relationship; *Service Learning; *Student Participation

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the benefits of incorporating the pedagogy of service-learning in two first-year seminar courses by examining: (1) the unique ways service can be incorporated in freshman classes; (2) the extent of interpersonal connections made as a result of the service; and (3) the impact of service on future community service involvement. First-year students enrolled in the Alpha seminar program in either of two introductory classes were surveyed. Responses were received from 14 students from 1 class (response rate, 35%) and 21 students from the other (response rate, 47%). Results of the survey show that most students in both courses found the service-learning experience to influence subsequent service positively, to facilitate connections within the class and in the community, and to be very beneficial overall. More research is needed to determine the aspects of the service-learning experience that contributed most to change in student perceptions and behaviors. An appendix contains the survey. (Contains 3 tables and 17 references.) (SLD)

Running head: SERVICE-LEARNING IN THE FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR

ED 477 442

**Service-Learning in the First-Year Seminar:
Providing Reciprocal Benefits and Enhancing Connections**

Janet Preis, Ed.D.,
Department of Speech/Language Pathology and Audiology
jpreis1@loyola.edu

L. Mickey Fenzel, Ph.D.
Education Department
lfenzel@loyola.edu

Loyola College in Maryland
4501 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21210

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS
BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Preis

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to
improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this
document do not necessarily represent
official OERI position or policy.

Paper presented as part of the symposium, *Higher Education and Service Learning:*

Partnerships in Practice, at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research

Association, April, 2003, Chicago, IL.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

This study investigated the benefits of incorporating the pedagogy of service-learning in two first-year seminar courses by examining (a) the unique ways service can be incorporated in freshman classes, (b) the extent of interpersonal connections made as a result of the service, and (c) the impact of service on future community service involvement. First-year students enrolled in the Alpha seminar program in either *Introduction to Human Communication* or *Introductory Psychology* over the past three years were surveyed. The Alpha program was instituted by the College to allow first-year students to engage in an academically challenging course in a small seminar format with additional class time. The results of the survey showed that most students in both courses found the service-learning experience to positively influence subsequent service, to facilitate connections within the class and in the community, and to be very beneficial overall. More research is needed to determine which aspects of the service-learning experience contributed most to change in student perceptions and behaviors.

**Service-Learning in the First-Year Seminar:
Providing Reciprocal Benefits and Enhancing Connections**

First-year seminars, which are a part of the academic environment at over 70% of the accredited undergraduate colleges and universities in the US (Barefoot & Gardner, 1998), have been instituted to help connect students to the institution and thereby ease their transition to college. At Loyola College in Maryland a number of faculty members have found the first-year seminar to provide conditions for teaching and learning that enable them to maximize the reciprocal benefits of service-learning for students and the community. In the present study, we, two instructors of first-year seminars, describe how we utilized the first-year seminar structure to enhance the service-learning experience for students and examine how these unique service-learning experiences, in turn, furthered the goals of the seminar to provide a means for students to connect more substantially to the college and the greater city community. In addition to presenting evidence of how we have enhanced the service-learning experience in the context of the first-year seminar, we also present student reactions to and evaluations of the service-learning with respect to how it enhanced students' levels of connectedness.

Beginning in the mid-1980s, educators (e.g., Boyer, 1987; Newman, 1985) began to call out for a greater commitment from colleges and universities to help students assume more civic and social responsibility through the curriculum. Higher educational institutions have responded by incorporating curricular and co-curricular programs with the goals of furthering students' awareness of public issues and community needs, helping to foster the development of ethical leadership, and encouraging students to assume a lifelong commitment to social responsibility (Kendall, 1990). Service-learning, the incorporation of community service experiences in an academic course that enhances learning of course

material and contributes to students' preparation for continued civic participation (Howard, 2001), has become a popular curricular innovation that has responded to the challenges of such goals (Leary, 1994). When service-learning experiences bring students into close out-of-classroom contact with classmates and instructors, as well as members of the community beyond the College, they can provide the additional benefit of enabling students to experience a heightened sense of belongingness and connectedness to the people with whom they share these experiences thus enhancing the quality of the college transition.

Although no studies to date have shown specifically a relation between participating in college community service or service-learning and feelings of connectedness or belongingness to students' colleges, classmates, instructors, or community members, some research on so-called *affective* outcomes has provided some indication of such relations. For example, Astin and Sax (1998) showed that participating in college community service was related to higher levels of students' self-reported ability to work cooperatively with others and the amount of contact they reported with college faculty. They also found that involvement in course-based service was related to increases in students' commitment to serving the community and plans to participate in service in the future, in addition to other outcomes. Furthermore, Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, and Yee (2000) reported that the positive effects of participating in college service experiences take place, in part, because student-to-student interaction is increased, as is emotional support from faculty, factors that very likely enhance students' levels of connectedness to their college.

The evidence is mounting that service-learning contributes to academic and affective outcomes of learning in higher education (e.g., Eyler & Giles, 2002; Kezar &

Rhoads, 2001). One important affective objective of the first-year seminar, that can be accomplished by service-learning, is to facilitate meaningful interpersonal connections between students and the professor and other students (Upcraft & Gardner, 1989).

Engaging in such interpersonal connections provides an important context for first-year students to develop improved levels of interpersonal competence and further the social developmental tasks of late adolescence (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Some researchers (Barefoot & Gardner, 1993; Upcraft & Gardner, 1989) have suggested that making those interpersonal connections to individuals in the college or university, especially early in the first semester of the first year of college (Levitz & Noel, 1989), can make a difference in a student's decision to remain at the institution.

Research on the benefits of both small first-year seminars and service-learning for students in terms of helping them to develop interpersonal relationships and interpersonal competencies suggests that service-learning could make an important contribution to the success of first-year seminars. The present study provides an investigation of the benefits of incorporating the pedagogy of service-learning in two first-year seminar courses. To this end, the following research questions are examined:

1. In what unique ways can professors incorporate service-learning as an integral part of a first-year seminar course?
2. To what extent does service-learning contribute to facilitating interpersonal connections that students in first-year seminars make to other students, faculty, the college, and to members of the greater community?

3. What are students' perceptions of the service-learning experience in terms of how it facilitated these interpersonal connections and led them to future service involvement?

Description of the Service-Learning Courses and the Alpha Seminar Program

The Alpha seminar program. The Alpha program was instituted by the College to provide first-year students with an academically challenging experience and closer relationship with their faculty instructor within the context of a small seminar. In addition, the program identified four "habits" that are integrated into each course: careful reading, persuasive and elegant writing, intellectual conversation, and living a life examined. An enrollment limit of 16 students and a fourth hour of class time are two aspects of the seminars that are designed to enrich the academic experience of the students who participate in the elective program.

Introduction to Human Communication: An exploration of internal and external influences. The first author adapted this introductory course in speech/language pathology into the Alpha format in the fall of 2000 and has taught it for four additional semesters since that time. The course addresses the components and principles surrounding human communication, as well as the impact of perception, difference, and language on this process. Prior to the Alpha course, the instructor taught a similar course (although not identical) for three semesters to approximately 25 students per class. Service-learning was not a component of the course prior to the Alpha conversion.

In the Alpha course the students are required to engage in a minimum of six hours of service across varying events throughout the semester. Almost all of the service experiences are one-time events, each requiring the participation of numerous students. The instructor

sets up the service activities such that the students participate with a small number of classmates as well as with the professor for each event. The primary goal of this model is to introduce first-year students to service and to the community of Baltimore in a supported environment. Some examples of the events used across the semesters are as follows: Fall cleanup of urban neighborhoods; trick or treating and an Easter hunt with students from Baltimore city's middle schools and after school programs; a Halloween carnival with adults with developmental disabilities; a formal dance for senior citizens from area nursing homes; a campus dinner with current and previous members of the homeless community in Baltimore; visits to a home for adults with end stage HIV; and *Special Olympics* for children and adolescents with a variety of disabilities. In addition, the students are encouraged to volunteer at a city meal program to prepare and serve meals to persons who are homeless or in need. Although the instructor does not attend all events every semester, she attends at least 75 percent of them, providing faculty support and direction as needed. A second-year student who was enrolled in the course in a previous semester (the Alpha helper) attends any events the instructor cannot, allowing at least one "senior" member to be present across all service experiences. This presence, rather than take on a flavor of "policing," allows the instructor to co-experience an event, and sets the stage for mutual discussion and shared processing during and after the experience. In addition, this model allows the instructor to directly relate each of the service experiences to academic content (e.g., perception, effective communication, differences in styles, etc.) using recent and shared events as real life examples related to class topics.

The Alpha format of this course in communication has contributed to the success of service in many ways (see Table 1). First, the students expect to engage in activities outside

of the classroom, and are possibly more willing than “non-Alpha” students to attend functions in the evening and on weekends. Second, the small class allows all of the students equal and easy opportunities to obtain the desired number of direct service hours, as the students sign up early in the semester for any and all events in which they are interested. The instructor has noted consistently across the semesters that students are most interested in attending the events that they know others in the class are attending as well. Third, the class size as well as the additional class time allows the students and professor to engage in discussion and reflection on most of the service experiences, allowing all of the students to at least “witness” events that they may have been unable to attend. Finally, students enrolled in the Alpha seminars are aware of the expectation for the additional writing, beyond that expected in the traditional *Introduction to Human Communication* course. This component facilitates the integration of academic content to the service-learning experience as students are required to write at least one reflection paper addressing what occurred, what they learned, and what they will do with this new knowledge. This written reflection often forces the students to connect service with course content, as they are required to correlate all service experiences with the topics covered in the course, typically that of perception and the influence on communicative exchange. The design of the Alpha seminars, with its small class size, heightened academic requirements, additional class time, and a focus on “living a life examined” is a natural and supportive environment for the introduction of service-learning to first-year students.

Introductory Psychology: Human behavior in diverse contexts. The second author has taught this introductory psychology course in the College’s Alpha seminar program during the fall semester for the past four years and taught a similar version of the course to a

class of 35 students for the two years prior to offering the course as an Alpha seminar. The service-learning component, required as part of the Alpha course but optional in the standard course offering, was enriched in the Alpha program in several ways. In the Alpha program, students performed the 18 hours of required service in groups of two to five in the same area of the city and, together with the faculty instructor and a second-year Alpha student assistant, participated in three hours of an on-site orientation to the neighborhood and the umbrella organization that was sponsoring the set of service opportunities in the inner city. Because all students in the class participated in service and did so in the same area of Baltimore city, class reflection discussions took place more frequently than they did in the regular course sections and could be focused on the common experiences shared by the students. In addition, because the Alpha program required more writing of students than did non-Alpha courses, students wrote two brief reflection papers on their service experience that related the service to course content and one longer reflection paper that resembled an op ed newspaper piece that addressed both the service experience and an issue related to urban poverty.

The level of participation of the faculty instructor in the service enterprise with students and the time that was devoted to discussions of the service experiences in class enabled students to interact with the faculty instructor and their classmates more than they would have in a non-Alpha course. The service experience of the students was further enriched by the selection of a second-year student assistant whom the faculty instructor identified as someone who was especially committed to service and social justice and who had participated in the instructor's course the previous year. This student participated in several discussions of the service experiences with the first-year students and led at least one

group reflection. Table 2 outlines the components of the service-learning experience in this Alpha course that represented improvements over the service-learning experience for students in the instructor's "regular" introductory psychology classes.

Method

Participants

Participants in the present study were students at a residential Jesuit Catholic liberal arts college on the east coast. Email surveys were sent to students who had enrolled as first-year students in either the *Introduction to Human Communication* course (N=40; 2 men and 38 women) or the *Introductory Psychology* course (N=45; 5 men and 40 women) over the past three years (i.e., 2000 through 2002). Fourteen students (35%; 14 women) in the *Human Communication* class and 21 students (47%; 2 men and 19 women) in *Introductory Psychology* responded. Although demographic data were not collected on the email surveys, all students in the two classes were of traditional college student age, and all but one psychology student were Caucasian. All of the students engaged in service-learning experiences throughout their first semester at the College, completing either a minimum of 6 hours in speech pathology or 18 hours in psychology. In addition to the email surveys, 42 end-of-semester service-learning evaluations were completed by Alpha psychology students.

Design and Procedure

Email survey. A survey concerning service-learning in Alpha classes was sent in February of 2003 to all of the students enrolled in either the specified speech pathology or psychology fall Alpha courses from 2000 through 2002. The survey consisted of three questions (see Appendix A for the complete survey): (a) Did the service-learning component of the Alpha course influence your decision to engage in service after your first semester?;

(b) Did the service-learning component of the Alpha course facilitate any connections for you to classmates, professor, the college, and/or the community?; and (c) How beneficial was the service-learning component of your Alpha course overall? The instructors sent an introductory letter electronically to the students approximately one week prior to the distribution of the survey to request students' participation. Subsequently, a letter from each instructor's graduate assistant was sent by e-mail containing instructions with the surveys attached. In order to assure anonymity the students were permitted to respond directly to the graduate assistant via e-mail or to return a printed copy to either the speech pathology or psychology departments. The graduate assistants removed all names and other identifying information from any surveys received electronically before submitting them to the instructors. Follow-up emails were sent to the students at one and two weeks after the initial mailing by the graduate assistant to encourage the completion of the survey.

Service-learning course evaluation. The psychology instructor administered 2-page pencil-and-paper service-learning in-class evaluations furnished by the community service office of the College at the end of the semester to all three Alpha psychology classes. On the survey students rated the quality of the service-learning experience, the extent to which the experience increased or decreased their interest in performing service, and their attitudes toward social responsibility and people of different socio-economic classes and races. The survey also asked students to rate the extent to which the service-learning experience contributed to their learning of course content and how much the course material contributed to their service experience. In all, responses from 42 students were obtained and analyzed. These surveys were not administered to the students in the communication course.

Results

The results of student responses to the email surveys for both the *Introduction to Human Communication* and the *Introductory Psychology* courses are summarized in Table 3. These results show that most students in both courses found the service-learning experience to positively influence subsequent service involvement, to facilitate connections within the class and in the community, and to be very beneficial overall. Specific findings for each of the courses are explained in greater detail below.

Introduction to Human Communication

Question 1: Did the service-learning component of your Alpha course influence your decision to engage in service after your first semester? Ten of the 14 (71%) survey respondents indicated that service-learning positively influenced future service work; three (21%) reported “not necessarily,” and one (7%) replied negatively. The students who found the service a positive influence reported in their narratives that the service experiences were “very moving; a good introduction to service; really enjoyed [it]; valuable for learning and life in general; the service motivated me.” Of these ten students, eight are currently engaged in service with a community organization; two are “looking into it.” The three students who responded that service did not necessarily influence their decision for future involvement all reported that they were already interested in service prior to enrolling in the Alpha course. All three of these students are engaged in service with at least one local community site. The one student who reported that service-learning did not influence the decision to continue reported that the class “introduced me to types of service available on campus but did not influence my decision to serve.” This student is currently not engaged in service.

Question 2: Did the service-learning component of your Alpha course facilitate any connections to your classmates, your professor, the college, and/or the Baltimore community? According to the student responses, the service-learning component of the Alpha course facilitated the greatest connections with classmates and the Baltimore community, followed by connections with the professor, with the least reported connection noted to the college. Eighty-six percent of the respondents indicated a connection with their classmates, with 79% finding connections to the greater Baltimore community. Connections with the professor and the college were reported for 64% and 50% of the responding students, respectively. Minimal narrative accompanied responses to this question, with only three students elaborating on their response, indicating the “closeness between the students and the professor was a direct result of encouragement of teacher, not just the service.”

Question 3: In hindsight, how beneficial was the service-learning component of your Alpha course? Almost all of the students reported that the service-learning component of the Alpha course was beneficial. Eighty-six percent of the students indicated that the service component was beneficial, even for those who reported they “didn’t like it when [I] was doing it.” A review of the narrative comments found a common reaction across students stating that the service helped them make the first step and allowed them to learn beyond the classroom and the campus. One of the students even reported that the “service should become an even bigger part of the class.” The student who found the service “somewhat beneficial” expressed a wish to have chosen more opportunities to engage in service off-campus. The student who reported the service-learning was “not beneficial” reported it was not a benefit to students not already interested and was concerned about the requirement becoming “forced service.”

Introductory Psychology

Question 1: Did the service-learning component of your Alpha course influence your decision to engage in service after your first semester? Eighteen of the 21 (86%) survey respondents indicated that service-learning positively influenced future service work; one reported “not necessarily;” and two (10%) replied negatively. Several students listed their service involvements that followed from their first year. One student, who went on to become a student service coordinator in the College’s service office, wrote that she increased her service activities in the part of Baltimore city where the Alpha service took place and continued to write to the children with whom she worked in her first-year placement. One student indicated that the service experience “did not influence my decision greatly because I knew I wanted to participate in service projects. It did confirm that I wanted to continue and opened several doors showing me more options of what I could be involved in.” Only one student wrote that she was not interested in continuing service and saw the service-learning as an imposed course requirement.

Question 2: Did the service-learning component of your Alpha course facilitate any connections to your classmates, your professor, the college, and/or the Baltimore community? Similar to what was reported by the speech pathology students, and as shown in Table 3, psychology students reported that the service-learning facilitated connections mostly to the greater Baltimore community (86%) and to their classmates (62%). A student who took the seminar in 2000 wrote: “My professor was someone who participated in a service activity and I enjoyed talking to him about my experiences.” Another student wrote that: “The service component connected me with Baltimore in a big way. The class facilitated this connection through the readings and lectures that we took part in.”

Question 3: In hindsight, how beneficial was the service-learning component of your Alpha course? Although one student wrote that the benefit to her was only as a "resume builder," 86% of students indicated that the experience was very valuable. One student wrote:

I think the service-learning component is so very important. It made the material I learned in class so much more practical. Seeing for myself the dire need just within the Baltimore area for improvement has motivated me. I think service-learning is a very effective technique and could help students learn a lot more than simply listening to lectures or reading text books. The information becomes so much more real.

Another student wrote:

The benefits of service go beyond that immediate connection that the person doing service gets with the person they [sic] are helping. It is a sharing of gifts and a mutual exchange of love and attention. [I]t gives me a sense of purpose and a realism that cannot be surpassed.

Service-learning end-of-course evaluations. Results of pencil-and-paper evaluations administered to the Alpha psychology students in each of the fall semesters of 2000, 2001, and 2002 showed that they found the service-learning experience to be very beneficial. A majority of respondents indicated that the service experience made them either *much more interested* (38%) or *somewhat more interested* (38%) in being involved in community service in the future (for the remaining 24% the students' level of interest was unchanged). In addition, 86% of respondents indicated that they felt it was *extremely important* that *society takes steps to address issues affecting people who are disadvantaged* (12% felt it

was *somewhat important*). For 57% of respondents their belief regarding society's responsibility *became more important* as a result of their service-learning experience, and for the remaining 43% their response represented no change in their pre-service belief. With respect to the extent to which students held more or fewer stereotypes about people of different *socio-economic or racial/ethnic groups* as a result of the service experience, 43% indicated that they held fewer stereotypes and the remaining 57% indicated no change. Students were also asked to rate the extent to which the service experience contributed to their learning of course material on a 5-point scale. The mean response of 3.4 indicates that students felt the service contributed more than *some* (rating of 3) and less than *quite a lot* (rating of 5). Also, students' mean rating of 3.3 with respect to the extent to which course material helped them make sense of their community work indicates a similar level of benefit. Finally, a majority of students (62%) indicated that *Yes* they would take another service-learning course, with another 33% indicating that *Maybe* they would.

Discussion

The present study was undertaken (a) to describe some unique ways two professors incorporated service-learning as an integral part of a first-year seminar course, (b) to examine the extent to which service-learning contributed to the facilitation of interpersonal connections of the students to other students, faculty, the college, and to members of the greater community, and (c) to examine the benefits of participation in service-learning in terms of students' social attitudes and desires to participate in future community service.

In the present study, the instructors enumerated several ways in which they expanded the service-learning component of their first-year courses beyond what they could have accomplished in a regular course format. The small class size, the additional class time, the

expectation of students to participate in events outside of class, and the heightened academic expectations of students are the critical components of the Alpha first-year seminar that contributed to the enhanced service-learning experience. These elements of the seminar enabled direct instructor involvement in the service experiences, considerable class time devoted to preparation and reflection, additional reading and writing assignments that could complement the service activities, greater student participation in class discussions, and support from a student assistant. With these enhancements, the instructors were able to provide a service-learning experience at a level beyond that which could be accomplished in a regular first-year course.

Some of the benefits to students from these service-learning enhancements contributed to the accomplishment of an important first-year Alpha seminar goal, namely connectedness of the students to their peers, instructor, College, and community. As reported by students in the two courses, the service-learning facilitated connections primarily with the community in which the service was performed and, secondly, with their classmates. Differences in students' responses regarding the focus of connectedness between the two courses are likely to be reflections of the different ways in which the two instructors structured the service experiences. For example, the higher percentage of students in the *Human Communication* course who reported a connection to the faculty instructor and to the College may reflect that professor's greater level of participation in the actual service experiences and the inclusion of service experiences that took place on, or in very close proximity to, the College campus. In addition, the nature of the service experiences in the human communication course enabled those students to spend more time with a greater number of their classmates than was afforded the psychology students. This difference may

have led to the slightly greater number of speech pathology students who reported a greater level of connectedness to classmates as a result of the service. Despite the differences between the two courses in the number of service hours required of students and the format of the service experiences (repeated involvement in one placement over the course of 10 weeks, involving at least 18 hours of direct service, in the psychology course versus participation in one-time group service events for a minimum of 6 hours of service in the communication course), a high percentage of students in both classes reported some level of connectedness to the Baltimore community.

With respect to the third objective of the study, a large percentage of students in both classes reported a desire to continue their involvement in service after the conclusion of the semester as a result of their service-learning experience. The somewhat higher percentage of psychology students, as compared to speech pathology students, who expressed this desire may reflect the greater number of hours devoted to service and the opportunity to remain in one placement over the semester. Several psychology students indicated a desire to continue service on their own at their particular placement, whereas speech pathology students tended to express a more general interest in continuing to be involved in service.

With respect to students' attitudes toward society's responsibility to support people who are disadvantaged, data collected in the psychology class showed that students overwhelmingly endorsed this view. In addition, a majority of them indicated that this belief became stronger as a result of service-learning in the Alpha class. Furthermore, nearly half of the psychology students indicated that they held fewer stereotypes of people of different socio-economic and racial/ethnic groups, with the other half indicating no change in this belief, as a result of the service-learning experience.

Clearly, a very large percentage of students in both classes found the service-learning to be very beneficial. Comments from students indicated that the service-learning provided a positive introduction to service, facilitated connections to people both at the College and the greater Baltimore community, and contributed to a deeper learning of course material and a greater commitment to civic responsibility. Such benefits are consistent with the overall goals of service-learning in higher education (Howard, 2001), as well as with the Jesuit mission in higher education (Loyola College, n.d.a) and the Alpha first-year seminar program (Loyola College, n.d.b). With respect to the Jesuit mission at the College, the students are afforded an opportunity to “learn, lead and serve in a diverse and changing world” (Loyola College, n.d.a, Mission section) through the service experience. In addition, the goals of the Alpha program to engage students in scholastic conversation, careful reading, and critical thinking (Loyola College, n.d.b.) are realized.

A principal limitation of the present study is the absence of a comparison group of regular first-year classes that include a service-learning component. Although the findings of the present study of the benefits afforded the students from participating in service-learning are compelling, the authors cannot conclude that these benefits exceed those that could be found in regular versions of the same courses. Future research would then benefit from the inclusion of carefully selected comparison classes. A second limitation lies in the response rates of the email surveys as there is no guarantee that the views of the non-responding students would be similar to those who did respond. Although the findings of end-of-semester service evaluations completed by nearly all students in the psychology classes showed a high level of consistency with the findings of the email surveys, such a comparison was not available for the speech pathology students.

Additional research is needed to examine more the effects of service-learning participation on students' attitudes toward personal and social responsibility and what aspects of a service-learning experience might contribute to such attitude change. This research might uncover the extent to which such factors as required hours of service, consistency of placement, level of instructor involvement, and nature of course readings, assignments, and class discussions are involved.

References

- Astin, A. W., & Sax, L. J. (1998). How undergraduates are affected by service participation. *Journal of College Student Development*, 39, 251-263.
- Astin, A. W., Vogelgesang, L. J., Ikeda, E. K., & Yee, J. A. (2000). *How service learning affects students: Executive summary*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/slc/rhowas.html>
- Barefoot, B. O., & Gardner, J. N. (1993). The freshman orientation seminar: Extending the benefits of traditional orientation. In M. L. Upcraft, R. H. Mullendore, B. O. Barefoot, & D. S. Fidler (Eds.), *Designing successful transitions: A guide for orienting students to college* (Monograph No. 13) (pp. 141-154). Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the Freshman Year Experience.
- Barefoot, B. O., & Gardner, J. N. (1998, October). Introduction. In B. O. Barefoot, C. L. Warnock, M. P. Dickinson, S. E. Richardson, & M. R. Roberts (Eds.), *Exploring the evidence, Vol. II, Reporting outcomes of first-year seminars* (Monograph Series No. 25) (pp. xiii-xiv). Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.
- Boyer, E. (1987). *College: The undergraduate experience in America*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Chickering, A. W., & Reisser, L. (1993). *Education and identity* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Eyler, J., & Giles, D. E., Jr. (2002). Beyond surveys: Using the problem solving interview to assess the impact of service-learning on understanding and critical thinking. In A. Furco &

- S. H. Billig (Eds.), *Service-learning: The essence of the pedagogy* (pp. 147-160).
Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.
- Fenzel, L. M., & Leary, T. (1997, March). *Evaluating outcomes of service-learning courses at a parochial college*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.
- Howard, J. (2001). *Service-learning course design workbook*. Ann Arbor, MI: OCSL Press.
- Kendall, J. (Ed.) (1990). *Combining service and learning: A resource book for community and public service, Vol. 1*. Raleigh, NC: National Society for Internships and Experiential Education.
- Kezar, A., & Rhoads, R. A. (2001). The dynamic tensions of service learning in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education*, 72, 148-156.
- Leary, T. P. (1994). *Combining service and learning: A comparative study of the relationship between a classroom sponsored service-learning initiative and the moral, civic, and intellectual lives of college students*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation.
College Park, MD: University of Maryland.
- Newman, F. (1985). *Higher education and the American resurgence*. A Carnegie Foundation Special Report. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Loyola College in Maryland (n.d.a). *The mission*. Retrieved April 1, 2003, from Loyola College: A Jesuit Institution <http://www.loyola.edu/about/jesuitidentity/index.html>
- Loyola College in Maryland (n.d.b). *First-year programs*. Retrieved April 1, 2003, from Loyola College Office of Dean of First-Year Students and Academic Services <http://www.loyola.edu/academics/firstyearprograms/index.html>

Upcraft, M. L., & Gardner, J. N. (1989). A comprehensive approach to enhancing freshman success. In M. L. Upcraft & J. N. Gardner (Eds.), *The freshman year experience: Helping students survive and succeed in college* (pp. 1-12). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Table 1

Aspects of Service-Learning in the Alpha Human Communication Seminar that Were Improvements over the Regular Human Communication Seminar

- The instructor directly participates in most of the service experiences with the students
 - A student assistant is present at any events where the instructor cannot
 - The format and expectations of the Alpha seminar program facilitates a high level of student participation in the service activities
 - Considerable class time can be devoted to preparation and reflection
 - Service experience is integrated with varying academic topics for both discussion and written reflection
 - Additional readings are assigned that relate to both service and course content
 - Understanding of communication differences across cultures, gender, age groups, and socio-economic status is enhanced through service
 - The small group participation allows the students to become connected in an experience and to have a common basis for discussion
 - Small class size allows all of the students to witness their instructor actively engaged in service
 - Small class size allows all of the students to engage in discussions with the instructor and each other, sharing varying perceptions and reactions to the experiences
-

Table 2

Aspects of Service-Learning in the Alpha Psychology Seminar that Were Improvements in the Service-Learning Component of Regular Psychology Course

- More direct involvement of instructor in the service experience
 - Participation of a student assistant with service-learning experience
 - Students participate in service activities in groups
 - Service activities take place within one umbrella agency in one city neighborhood
 - More class hours devoted to preparation and reflection
 - More student reflective writing on service experience
 - More attention by instructor to issues of diversity and social justice
 - Additional readings assigned that relate to both service and course content
 - Direct interaction between faculty instructor and agency representatives
 - Small class size for greater student participation in service discussions and more direct interaction between instructor and students
-

Table 3

Results of the Service-Learning Email Survey

	<i>Human Communication</i> (N = 14)	<i>Psychology</i> (N = 21)
1. Did the service-learning influence your decision to engage in service after your first semester?	yes: 71% not necessarily: 21% no: 7%	yes: 86% not necessarily: 5% no: 10%
2. Did the service-learning facilitate any connections for you?	class: 86% professor: 64% college: 50% community: 79%	class: 62% professor: 38% college: 14% community: 86%
3. Overall how beneficial was the service-learning component?	very: 86% somewhat: 7% not beneficial: 7%	very: 86% somewhat: 14% not beneficial: 0%

APPENDIX A

*Alpha Service-Learning Survey***SP 202: Preis** (Human Communication)**PY 101: Fenzel** (Introductory Psychology)

Please respond thoroughly to all parts of each of the following questions.

The **fall term** in which
you took the Alpha class:

_____ 2000
_____ 2001
_____ 2002

Your Gender: _____ Female

_____ Male

1. Did the service-learning component of your Alpha course influence your decision to engage in service after your first semester? Why or why not, and, if so, how? What service activities are you participating in at the present?

2. Did the service-learning component of your Alpha course facilitate any connections for you? Specifically, did the service component connect you to: (a) your classmates, (b) your professor, (c) the college, and/or (d) the Baltimore community? Did the service-learning experience facilitate these connections in any unique ways (that is, in ways that other parts of your Loyola and Alpha experiences did not)?

3. In hindsight, how beneficial overall was the service-learning component of your Alpha course? Please explain.



U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

H2035946



REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: <i>Service - Learning in the First-Year Seminar: Providing Reciprocal Benefits & Enhancing Connections</i>	
Author(s): <i>Janet Preis & L. Mickey Fenzel</i>	
Corporate Source: <i>Loyola College in MD 4501 N. Charles St. Balt MD 21210</i>	Publication Date: <i>4/21/03</i>

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY <i>Sample</i> TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
1

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY <i>Sample</i> TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
2A

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY <i>Sample</i> TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
2B

Level 1



Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy

Level 2A



Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

Level 2B



Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign
here, →
please

Signature: <i>Janet Preis, Ed.D.</i>	Printed Name/Position/Title: <i>Janet Preis Ed.D. Assistant Professor</i>
Organization/Address: <i>Loyola College in MD 4501 N. Charles St. Balt MD 21210</i>	Telephone: <i>410.617.2578</i>
	FAX: <i>410.617.5022</i>
	E-Mail Address: <i>jpreis@loyola.edu</i>
	Date: <i>6/9/03</i>

(User)

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

**ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
1129 SHRIVER LAB
COLLEGE PARK, MD 20742-5701
ATTN: ACQUISITIONS**

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

**ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
4483-A Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, Maryland 20706**

Telephone: 301-552-4200

Toll Free: 800-799-3742

FAX: 301-552-4700

e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov

WWW: <http://ericfacility.org>